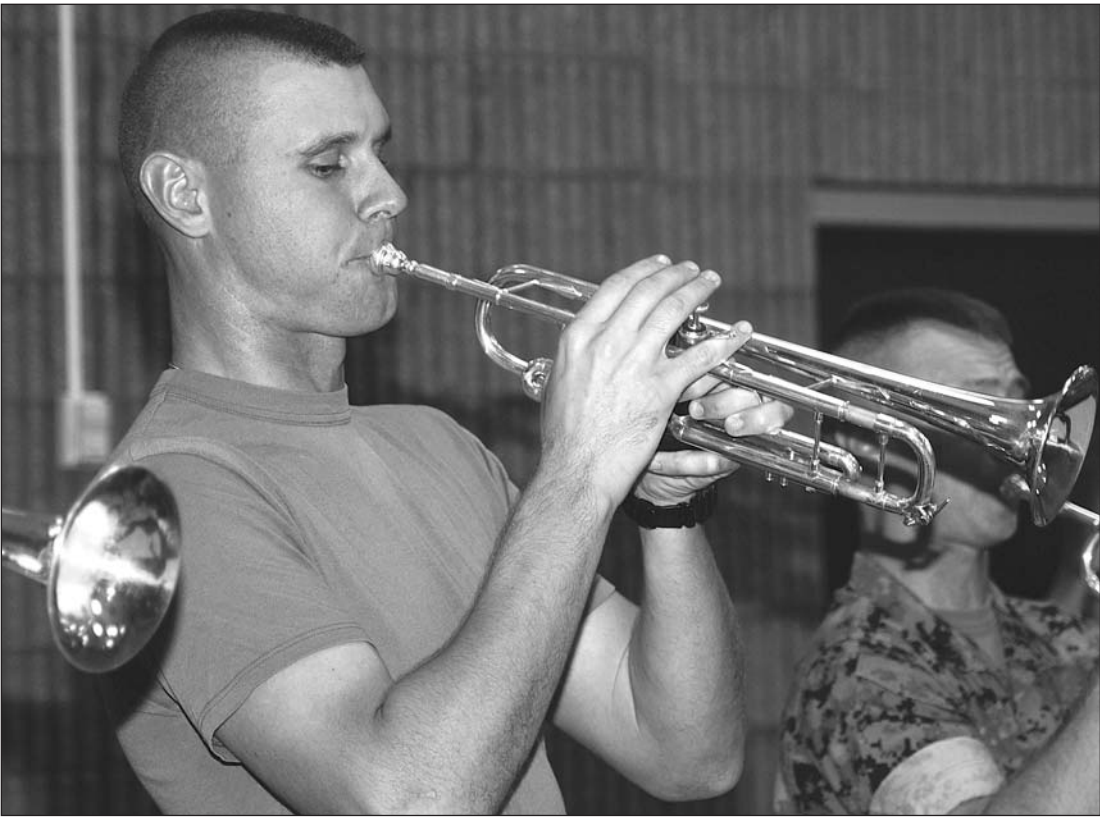


FEATURES

Holiday season means busy time for Parris Island band



Sergeant Duane King plays the trumpet during a practice for the Christmas concert the band will perform Dec. 13. King and the Parris Island Marine Band recently performed for 10 area birthday balls in 15 days.

PFC. JUSTIN J. SHEMANSKI
STAFF WRITER

With the holiday season well under way, families gather, gifts are exchanged and bands perform.

Playing many of their concerts during the last few months of each year, the Parris Island Marine Band is working overtime during this busy season.

On top of everything they have to do on a weekly basis -- Morning Colors, drill, and graduations -- the band has a whole list of performances scheduled from September through December. With such a tight schedule, this means they sometimes have to practice on their days off.

"We had to do 10 Marine Corps Birthday balls from Nov. 1 to Nov. 15," said Staff Sgt. Stephanie Errickson, the public affairs staff NCOIC for the band and also the woodwind section commander.

"The band also recently went to Pennsylvania, Orlando and Missouri to put on various performances," Errickson added.

One of the next big things they are working on is the Night On the Town concert Dec. 5 and a performance on Dec. 13, which has the Jazz Band section backing up the Liberty Bells, a singing group, in Orlando.

"The Jazz section is definitely the busiest," said Sgt. Steven Giove, small section leader and section commander for percussion.

Being the small section leader, Giove is in charge of making sure the Jazz section is prepared for their upcoming concert.

"That's the challenge here," said Giove. "With all the different band sections doing various other things, it's very hard to schedule a time to get the whole jazz section together," said Giove.

Giove said they are all part of other sections, which also need to practice for performances. If

one group isn't here, it's really hard get a whole lot done.

"There are also four members of the band who play in the Beaufort Symphony out in town. So they have practicing to do with them as well," Giove said.

"A lot of the times we perform when other people are off for a day. When the base had a long weekend a couple of weeks ago, we were doing a Veteran's Day parade," he said.

"Last weekend the band had balls to do and the Jazz Trio, the drums, piano and bass, were doing a performance for Toys for Tots," Giove said.

"Because we can't get together a lot, it is important that they practice on their own," added Giove.

Errickson added that after these last few busy months of the year, things usually slow down between January and March, giving the band a little break before it all starts back up again.

NHB sailor earns chance to play for All Armed Forces team

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS AMY PERRY
437 AW PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A Naval Hospital Beaufort sailor is currently competing at Charleston Air Force Base to become one of 12 athletes selected to play on the All Armed Forces Basketball team.

If selected, Seaman M. Heson Groves will travel with the team to compete in the World Military Games in Catania, Sicily, which are held every four years since 1995.

One hundred twenty-seven member nations participate in the games that showcases 15 different sports, and is the second largest world-sporting event outside of the Olympics.

Groves said he is enthused to have this opportunity.

"This is the ultimate privilege," said Groves, who was a member of this year's All Navy team. "I wish others could experience the opportunity that these 12 guys are going to experience."

To make it to the All Armed Forces team, players had to be on their respective service's team, and representatives from each team had to vote on the players who would get the chance to represent the Armed Forces team at the games.

Since the All Marine Corps Basketball team won the Armed

Forces tournament, two Marines are taking their first steps toward the World Military Games as coaches of the All Armed Forces Basketball team.

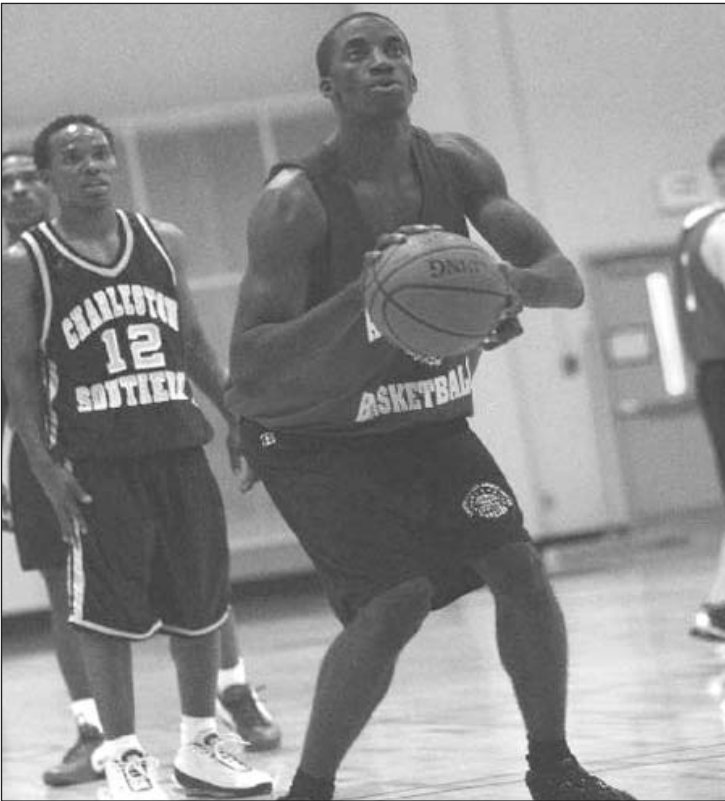
Master Gunnery Sgt. Antonio Robinson, a food technician from Headquarters and Services Company from Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., also known as "Coach Rob," is the head coach this year. James Jones, known as "Coach Red," is this year's assistant coach. He is a captain from Camp Lejeune, N.C., who coaches Camp Lejeune and Marine Corps Air Base Cherry Point, N.C., and takes his team up and down the East Coast to play basketball.

The two coaches have been in charge of the All Marine Corps team for the last two years, and this is their first year together as the All Armed Forces coaches.

Coach Rob describes their relation in comparison to bookends.

"We work well together," he said. "I'm the calm one, and Coach Red is always excited. But we also talk and communicate. Sometimes he sees things I don't see."

"Coach Rob has a very calm demeanor, and that helps on the court," said Coach Red. "I try to let the coach relax, so I take care of the [little] stuff that comes out. It's like good cop, bad cop on the court. Very rarely do I see



Special to The Boot
M. Heson Groves attempts a free throw at tryouts to become one of 12 players selected for the All Armed Forces Basketball team. The team will compete in the World Military Games in Catania, Sicily, the second largest sporting event in the world.

him get upset."

The coaches attribute their success on the court to their opposite attitudes during games. During practice, the story's different.

"During practice time is when you get excited," said Coach Rob.

"You get into the discipline there. That's our time."

Coach Rob said their opposite game-time attitudes were not planned, they just turned out that way.

Another key strategy of the

coaching duo is their emphasis on defensive man-to-man coverage.

Coach Red said this year's All Marine Corps team was the best defensive team he's ever seen.

"[The Marine Corps] played better as a team," said Eddie Goad, All Armed Forces project officer. "They showed unity, and they never quit. The leadership on the floor was great."

The opportunity to mentor the young Marines, airmen, soldiers and seamen is what drew both of them into coaching the Armed Forces squad.

"We try to instill the traditions of basketball into these guys," said Coach Rob. "We're in the 'And One' generation, where everyone thinks about themselves."

"I want to emphasize the fundamentals of basketball: sportsmanship, working hard and working as a team," said Coach Red.

Right now, their one goal is to concentrate on picking the 12 players to go for the gold at the WMG.

"Winning the gold, that's the bottom line," said Coach Rob. "There's nothing better to these guys than doing what they like best, and they all like basketball. We're going to make history this year, because we haven't won the gold yet."

"We [coaches Rob and Red] can't stand to lose," he continued. "When you lose, you can't wait to

play the next game to win again. It's like we didn't do our job, and you let the team down."

The opportunity for the players is once in a lifetime.

"There will be college and pro scouts at the games to watch the guys," said Coach Rob. "The most important part is representing the Armed Forces. There's nothing like the U.S."

Another advantage this year is the core group being made up of friends.

"I'm spoiled," said Coach Rob. "A couple of times, I've turned this [job] down. You see the staff you are going with, and you have to get along with that team."

"This is like a family reunion this year," he continued. "The players, assistant coach and project officer are all great. Eddie Goad [project officer] is one of the most important people [for this event]. He's got a passion for the game."

"Eddie Goad goes the extra mile," said Coach Red. "His attitude is to make sure when we get here, we only worry about basketball. He takes care of everything."

Both coaches expressed their thanks to the commands for allowing the players this vast opportunity.

"It's just an honor for me," said Coach Red. "When I talked about it to my command, I told them what an honor it would be to wear U.S.A. on my chest."

Traveling safe this holiday season

LANCE CPL. BRIAN KESTER
STAFF WRITER

When traveling home for the holidays, Depot personnel need to make safety a top priority. Arriving on time is important, but reaching your destination alive and well is worth a fashionably late arrival.

"Map out your routes, and have an alternate route in case of construction," said Sgt. Adam B. Heffelfinger, PMO Safety Officer. "Check Web sites or your American Automobile Association office to see about road conditions. Do basic vehicle checks. Make sure your tires aren't bald, check for nails sticking out of them, fluids in your vehicle, and make sure that your windshield wipers work. These are the same checks that we do every day with the government vehicles."

According to the AAA Web site, packing an emergency kit is always a good idea. Put in a flashlight, blankets, first-aid kit, fire extinguisher and in cold climates, extra clothing.

"Make sure you have an emergency kit," said Heffelfinger. "It should have things like road flares, blankets, and plenty of water to keep hydrated. Water is important not only for hydration, but in case your vehicle starts to overheat. You never know what is going to happen. You could get a flat tire and be stuck somewhere over night."

Along with being prepared for breakdowns and emergencies, Heffelfinger said that drivers should think about how long they will be driving and get the proper amount of sleep.

"Definitely get plenty of sleep before you go," said Heffelfinger. "You will need it. If you are getting tired, it's bet-

ter to pull off to the side of the road and catch a couple of Z's, than to push through and get into a wreck. I'm sure any command would rather have a late but alive Marine than a dead Marine because he didn't get any sleep."

Wearing a seatbelt is essential to your safety, said Heffelfinger. When the airbag pops out, that seat belt is going to prevent you from flying face first and hitting it before you are supposed to. Let's say you don't have an airbag in your vehicle, your seatbelt is going to keep you from getting ejected from that vehicle, which you see happen to a lot of people.

There are many Web sites available to find road conditions and information about safety on the roads such as www.aaa.com/scripts/WebObjects.dll/ZipCode, www.aapublicaffairs.com/Main.asp. For more, visit www.schp.org.

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